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[*Statements and speeches*]

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CULTURAL POLICY IN CANADA

Notes for an address by the Secretary of State,

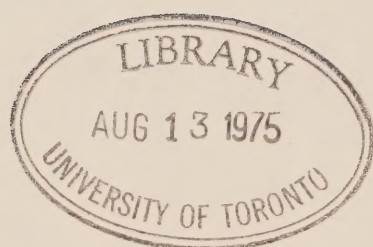
The Hon. Gérard Pelletier

to the

CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF THE ARTS

in Toronto

Saturday, September 12, 1970



My first duty - and my pleasure - as this gathering comes to a close is certainly to thank the Canadian Conference of the Arts. Your collective effort during the last few days, and the new awareness that has resulted from your deliberations, are of great value to all of us.

Yet if I were merely to congratulate you, or to commend your working groups and wish you plain sailing for another year, you would feel that I had got off too lightly. And you would be right. You expect more from the public authorities than statements of approval, more even than grants and other forms of support. You have made it plain to us that the time has come for governments to spell out their cultural policies and to make clear the extent and limits of their action. We are well aware that you want us to make known the philosophy underlying our relations with all those involved in the field of culture - from the artists, the creators and the performers to the "cultural animators", if I may use that rich but at the same time ambiguous expression.

You expect governments to commit themselves, to take stands and to start a dialogue. And when I accepted the invitation to address you today, I knew very well what was expected of me. Several times during the last two years I have tried to explain the attitude of the present Federal Government and its activities in the field of culture. Each time, I realize, my comments have been incomplete or fragmented, and at best have dealt only with a particular aspect of our policy. Today I would like to accept the challenge and to look at that policy as a whole. I would also like to discuss the thinking on which it is based and its implications for the future.

But before I tell you what our cultural policy is, let me begin by telling you what it is not.

In a recent article, Mr. Arthur Blakely had this to say about your humble servant: "He has emerged with several unattractive if unofficial titles; among them, czar of Canadian culture and enforcer extraordinary of B and B." Let me assure you that the humour of the comment does not escape me. If only the Opposition could come up with the same kind of thing more frequently parliamentary life would become much less monotonous.

But if sallies such as this are to strike home, they must at least come somewhere close to reality. And in fact it is very easy to show that the very structure of cultural institutions at the federal level rules out any possibility of dictatorship, or even of undue political influence on the activity of these agencies. I believe one could search throughout the government cultural bodies of any country in the world without finding a degree of autonomy comparable to that which the Parliament of Canada has conferred on our own. When the Secretary of State has to withstand the sustained fire of Opposition questions in the House nearly every day, I assure you that he is left with no illusions whatever as to his real powers, and by no stretch of the imagination can he mistake himself for a czar. In fact, there are only two answers he can give: either "I shall take the Honourable Member's question as notice and pass it to the authorities of the CBC, the Arts Council, the National Museums Corporation", or "the CBC, the Canada Council, etc. have informed me as follows". Is this a position of strength for a budding dictator?

And let it be said to the credit of successive governments in Ottawa, whatever their party, that the record has been clear since the beginning. No government has ever tried to influence cultural organizations for political purposes, or to impose its wishes on them.

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A few minor incidents have been reported, of course, but they can be counted on the fingers of one hand. And there has never been any governmental control over the cultural institutions set up by Parliament. This is so true that a good many Canadians believe that autonomy has been carried too far, and that it should be reduced.

This is a matter on which the Government's position could not be clearer. I had occasion to state this position officially last month at a UNESCO Conference. With your indulgence, I shall repeat this statement for you:

"Canada - or perhaps I should say the governments of Canada, federal and provincial - is vitally interested in cultural questions and in the development of cultural activities in our society. But we wish at any cost to avoid trying to impose intellectual standards which cannot favour true creative action. In our view, there is no alternative to individual creative initiative and a government should not only respect the freedom of the artist and scholar, but also provide for the independence of public institutions so that the specialists who direct them may base their actions on professional rather than political criteria".

The Prime Minister has commented on this point, in "Cultural Affairs". I think his remarks are worth quoting here.

"Our public authorities know full well that the arts and the sciences will always have increasing need of their help, but we believe that the freedom of the artist and government action are not irreconcilable. We rely on the advice of specialists, drawn for example from universities or professional associations, to ensure a fair distribution of public funds. On the other hand, through the give and take of an active dialogue and without limiting their freedom, we can make the artist or scholar aware of the urgency of current problems. It is not hard to understand, for example, that a government will accord high priority to research on the diffusion of culture or to aspects of film and television as art forms which reach a very large public and which can be powerful instruments of cultural progress or, unfortunately, of degradation."

"I do not think that modern society, nor the artist as a member of that society, need fear a generous policy of subsidy to the arts from governments as long as these governments have the courage to permit free expression and experimentation - and, for that matter, to take it in good part if the mirror held up to their nature is not always a flattering one."

It is therefore clear that no one in the Government has the slightest dictatorial ambitions. It is plain to us all that a department concerned with cultural affairs must not in any way regiment artistic creativity, much less itself become actively involved in it. Creative artists must remain free, as must the performers and cultural animators. The initiative must be theirs; otherwise they would not be able to play their cultural role in society.

It is no less certain, however, that the public authorities also have a part to play in the field of culture. There are very few people, if any, who now dispute the need for this. On the contrary, state assistance is sought for an endless variety of cultural endeavours, and even our neighbours to the south, long fiercely opposed to what they called "culture by subsidy", are this year committing themselves to state-supported cultural action. This year, it is worth noting in passing, the United States Government will pay in direct grants for cultural purposes about the same amount as the Government of Canada.

What exactly is the state's role - and I am speaking here of all three levels of government. Allow me to borrow the answer which the Tunisian Minister of Culture gave last month at the UNESCO Conference in Venice:

"We might just as well admit at the outset that the problem cannot be resolved by truisms to the effect that a frank and fruitful dialogue will ensue once a climate of freedom has been created. Obviously such a dialogue can determine our approach. But once the approach has been decided upon, where should our action be concentrated?"

"In the case that concerns us, the problem arises first of all in relation to finances, human resources and time."

"Thus it seems necessary, in order that access to and participation in culture may be guaranteed to all, that the public authorities take action to:

- 1/ appraise and restore the value of the cultural heritage;
- 2/ ensure liaison and interaction with the world's cultures;
- 3/ set up centres for cultural promotion throughout the country;
- 4/ safeguard the moral and social rights of the creative sector of our society."

It seems obvious, then, that governments must play an active part in the cultural development of society, that they cannot remain mere spectators. The Federal Government, for one, has long since been aware of this. The existence of the CBC, the Canada Council, the National Film Board, the Canadian Film Development Corporation, the CRTC, the National Arts Centre and the National Museums are ample evidence. Even leaving aside provincial and municipal institutions and programs, we already have an impressive cultural infrastructure.

Yet this array of institutions does not seem to have sprung from an overall plan or global assessment of cultural needs. It appears rather that each was created individually to meet specific needs, as and when they arose. This doubtless explains the charge that is most often leveled at the Government: that it has no overall view and no real cultural policy; that it persists in a piecemeal approach.

It also explains why my Department has been working over the past two years towards devising a global policy for which we all feel a need. We have approached the problem simultaneously on three fronts: priorities, co-ordination and orientation.

We often hear these days that government is no longer only a matter of providing for the future, but that it involves mainly the establishment of priorities. As a result we have taken care, within the Cabinet, to obtain a very high priority for cultural programs. We have sought Government recognition of the fact that such programs are not a luxury or a dangerous extravagance, but a necessity as absolute and as urgent as social security or economic development. We have also succeeded in establishing that cultural institutions can no longer be regarded by Government as so many separate "cases" to be dealt with in isolation from each other, but that they must be looked upon as component parts of a single instrument designed to advance a cohesive and unified program of cultural activities. For similar reasons we had to convince ourselves that the budget of each agency was a part of an overall cultural budget, which should be regarded as a single entity, like those for defence or transport. Perhaps you feel this is an insignificant or an obvious move. The truth is that governments all over the world must some day make this discovery and take this decision, and that thus far very few of them have recognized cultural programs as constituting one specific priority.

Our second line of attack has been related to problems of co-ordination. A cohesive cultural policy is impossible if the institutions responsible for implementing it are unable to co-ordinate their activities. This, too, is obvious. Yet in the past, there was no continuity of thought or action and no permanent machinery for co-operation and co-ordination between the various federal cultural institutions. The minister alone was responsible, through his personal intervention, for resolving contradictions arising out of the day-to-day activities of the agencies. This autumn, for the first time, an advisory committee composed of agency heads will begin meeting on a regular basis to work out long- and short-term policy objectives, the means of putting them into practice, and their budgetary implications.

It is through these activities that we believe an answer can be found to another quite justifiable demand: that artists and private agencies should take an active part in the formulation of overall policy.

We wholeheartedly share this view, and the advisory committee will include spokesmen for the artistic community, who will have the same status as the other members and will be involved in the decision-making process.

This, of course, will in no way diminish the importance my Department attaches to the activities and opinions of your Conference. Both my Department and the Government regard you as our prime medium of communication. In addition to maintaining our subsidies to your secretariat at their present level, we would like to work with you to establish permanent machinery for consultation and the exchange of views, so that we may be assured of a continuing contribution from you in the formulation and implementation of cultural policy.

In the same vein, I feel that recent key appointments have demonstrated our desire to entrust the management of cultural agencies to men of cultural distinction, wherever possible, even though such men sometimes tend to shy away from administrative or supervisory duties. But we do not believe that an arts policy can be implemented without the help of artists, any more than we believe any senior government official can acquire instant mastery of cultural affairs.

What we look for from you is not only ideas and creative suggestions, but also your thoughts and opinions on the practical conduct of cultural activities.

But let us return to the Advisory Committee.

I feel sure you will agree that this type of co-ordination, voluntarily agreed to by all the institutions in question, is neither sterile centralization nor an example of departmental authoritarianism. The agencies participate on the committee of their own free will, not only because they understand the need to co-ordinate their efforts, but also because they know that anarchy not co-operation constitutes the real threat to their autonomy.

I come now to the third and last aspect of our undertaking - orientation.

I have said just now that the Government has no intention of setting up any sort of dictatorship over cultural activities, and I meant what I said. However, this surely is not irreconcilable with the idea that the public authorities should try to give some orientation to such activities, provided of course that the type of orientation in question is carefully defined.

No one in the Government wants to bring about state control of the arts, or to impose a set of values on those involved in this field. On the contrary, we recognize that the continued questioning of established values is inherent in the role which these people must play if culture is to remain a living reality.

No one - whether in the Government as a whole or in the Secretary of State's Department - would consider for a moment the idea that the public authorities should impose aesthetic judgements or their own definition of culture. We know only too well what can happen when governments issue edicts in this area, as for example in the case of socialist realism or the various forms of official culture of the academies.

The orientation or direction a cultural policy should provide is quite different in character and should relate to methods of cultural expression rather than its fundamental objectives.

The department has already made known certain general lines along which we believe cultural activities should move. Let us look at them a little more closely. I think we might sum them up under the following headings:

Pluralism

Democratization

Decentralization

Federal-provincial co-operation

International co-operation

When we speak of cultural pluralism, we are making a fundamental choice for Canada, both now and for the future, for we are talking about the development in

Canada of a multi-cultural society. The Government refuses to sacrifice, in the name of unity through conformity, any of the cultures which are represented in our population, whether these cultures are European or native to Canada such as those of the Indians and Eskimos. Canada is not a "melting pot" and the Government is opposed to any measure aimed at assimilation. On the contrary, it encourages all initiatives which have as their object the promotion and dissemination -- alongside the two main cultures, English and French -- of other cultural values.

In the same vein, we do not set up any opposition between various forms of culture -- scientific and humanist, traditional and contemporary, élite and popular. We believe that these distinctions are largely artificial and prefer to consider all these values as components of a constantly changing and diversified cultural life. We will therefore tolerate no exclusivity, and we will work to reduce budgetary inequalities which tend to give privileges to one cultural group at the expense of the others.

I have spoken often enough and clearly enough about democratization, and it is not necessary to dwell on it here. I shall limit myself to saying that when the public authorities distribute tax monies which have been raised from the incomes of all citizens, they have no right to do so to the sole advantage of any one group.

To democratize culture is to ensure the propagation of our heritage and to encourage cultural expression at all levels of our society.

As for decentralization, it is nothing more than a horizontal extension of the action I have just mentioned, for it involves the diffusion of culture throughout the various regions of our vast country. It could be called cultural equalization, an equalization designed to do away with isolation caused by distance - a typically Canadian problem if ever there was one - and to irrigate what I have sometimes described as cultural wastelands, and which are still too numerous on this half of the continent we call Canada.

Nor shall I deal at any length with the theme of federal-provincial-municipal co-operation. Cultural activity is undergoing a vigorous development at all three levels of government. It would be absurd to act separately and in isolation, thus causing duplication and waste from which no one would benefit. From now on there must be co-operation and a harmonizing of efforts. Our Government, for its part, will spare no effort to promote effective and rational common action. In this field we favour emulation but not competition or any struggle for prestige.

What concerns us is not to create a good image for the Federal Government or to win compliments for it; we want to develop cultural activities which will be available to every Canadian citizen and which will meet the highest standards of excellence and efficiency.

Finally, I come to the not unimportant question of international relationships in this sphere. The Canadian Government realizes that cultural exchanges between peoples are playing a more and more significant role in the field of international relations. It is also aware of the fact that there are dominant cultures just as there are dominant economies, and that smaller powers like Canada must find some way of escaping from this twofold domination.

The solution in both cases is the same: we must diversify our external sources of culture, just as we seek to vary the sources of our foreign investments.

There can be no question of retiring within ourselves, of shutting ourselves up in our own house. We must keep our doors open - not only our doors to the United States, Great Britain and France, but all the others as well. We shall therefore do whatever we can to encourage cultural exchanges and co-operation with the greatest possible number of countries. Several cultural agreements have already been signed and others are to follow.

And these are not one-way agreements. In each case their purpose is to acquaint us with the culture of foreign countries, but also to make all forms of Canadian cultural life known abroad. Moreover, it is our purpose to provide a cultural dimension in all our programs of assistance and co-operation in the developing world.

Mr. Chairman, my comments this evening are no more than a brief review of the thoughts, the initial conclusions and the plans which, at the moment, constitute our cultural policy. It is up to you to judge, to criticize, perhaps to condemn. But what we are really counting on is suggestions from you which might enrich it, give it more precision, and make it better suited to the cultural needs of the Canadian people.

For it is with the people of Canada that we are concerned. We are not working in this field for our personal satisfaction. Our essential, indeed our only purpose is to improve the quality of life in Canada; to promote solidarity among all Canadians as they participate in a more and more stimulating cultural future; and finally, to prepare for that leisure civilization in which we may perish of mediocrity and boredom if we have not prepared ourselves for a sufficiently rich and intense intellectual life.

For I do not doubt for a moment, and here I shall bring my remarks to a close, that a worth-while cultural policy is nothing more or less, in the final analysis, than a plan for civilization.

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ADDRESS BY THE
HONOURABLE FRANCIS FOX
TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF YMCA
OF CANADA

GENEVA PARK, ONTARIO

MAY 29, 1981



Secretary
of State

Secrétariat
d'État

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I welcome this opportunity to be present at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of YMCA of Canada. I am particularly happy to speak to you in this beautiful setting of Geneva Park.

I want to talk to you tonight about participation, and how participation builds a stronger sense of belonging to the community and to the country.

Your work as a volunteer network in stimulating participation among millions of Canadians, has done much to strengthen our democratic institutions which are based on the interactions of people at the local level. In fostering participation by Canadians from all walks of life, your organization has been an active force in building a stronger sense of individual identity - the forerunner of a sense of belonging to our respective communities and to Canada.

Your association began in Canada in 1851. It predates Confederation. It thus predates modern Government involvement in community concerns. From your inception to the present, you have developed by your own efforts.

The secret of your success relates to the strength of your goal. In 1970 you adopted a new Statement of Purpose: It states: "The YMCA is a world-wide fellowship dedicated to

the growth of persons in spirit, mind and body, and a sense of responsibility to each other and to the human community." This goal is firmly rooted in the present. It mirrors, however, the goal of the ancient Greeks to develop "the whole man". Your triangular symbol, representing spirit, mind, and body, builds on this ideal. The Greek city states, with their emphasis on fitness and fair play, have left us a legacy which includes the Olympic games and the marathon. I dare say that many of Canada's present Olympic competitors first tested their skills at the YMCA. Thus do the present and the past meet.

Participation reflects the desire to live life more fully and to contribute to society rather than merely to receive its gifts. Participation, with its learning dimension, is education in its truest sense. And participation, like a molecule, splits and divides, covering a greater and greater area. Thus, in the case of the YMCA, your community programs have engendered regional programs, which have in turn led to national programs - which then expanded to the international level. Participation has thus encompassed every community - from the local to the global.

I would like to quote to you a passage from a recent report to the Club of Rome, entitled "No Limits to Learning." The report states:

"The right to participate is integrally linked to the right to learn. Individuals learn by participating in

interactions with society ... Participation in relation to global issues necessarily implies several simultaneous levels. On the one hand, the battleground of global issues is local. It is in the rice fields and irrigation ditches, in the shortages and over-abundances of food, and in the school on the corner... Thus, participation is necessarily anchored in the local setting. Yet it cannot be confined to localities. Preservation of the ecological and cultural heritage of humanity, resolution of energy and food problems, and national and international decisions about other great world issues all necessitate an understanding of the behaviour of large systems whose complexity requires far greater competence than we now possess... During times of danger or after a natural catastrophe, nearly everyone participates. Can we not learn to participate constructively when animated by a vision of common danger?"

The report to the Club of Rome went on to state that many non-governmental organizations provide the forums where new ideas and creative alternatives can be explored and simulated without the constraints of the existing economic, social, cultural, military or political obstacles.

I have quoted from that report at some length because I think that the message it gives is so clearly relevant to the activities which the YMCA has been pursuing at the various levels of participation.

I want to refer particularly to the work which you have been doing to open up the minds of Canadians to broader horizons.

Nation building has been a key component of your task. While physical fitness and health continues to be one of your primary roles, you have looked beyond individual growth. Your activities to assist immigrants and refugees to adjust to Canadian society have shown your commitment to the principle that Canadian residents of all ethnic origins must share in the benefits of our society.

Your Visions Program, an exchange centering on life-style and culture, developed jointly by the Metropolitan Toronto YMCA with the Inuit Tapirisat, has provided an enriched life experience to thousands of young people of Canada's own "north-south". I am pleased that the Department of the Secretary of State has contributed to this exchange through Open House Canada.

Last year over 1500 young people took part in your Visions Program. Exchange programs are a key mechanism for promoting a greater understanding and appreciation of the diversity of Canada. Your commitment to this kind of participation is vital in fostering among young people a knowledge of what this country is.

The YMCA has displayed innovation in response to social change. This has been evident, for example, in the

establishment of YMCA leisure centres in Fort McMurray. These centres have been established to combat the feeling of rootlessness which faces persons who have come from cities to a Western frontier community. The orientation and counselling provided by the YMCA in remote areas experiencing sudden growth contributes to the development of Canada's newest communities.

On yet another front, your efforts to create a bilingual capacity throughout Canada in your various organizational components show your commitment to the goal of equality of participation by anglophones and francophones. This national goal could not be effective without the cooperation of voluntary groups such as the YMCA. In this regard, I want to mention the role of the National Linguistic Centre of the YMCA. I was happy to support your initiatives in this field by the recent grant of \$100,000 for the development of bilingual capability. These funds come from a program of the Department of the Secretary of State which is concerned with the promotion of official languages in the private and non-federal public sectors.

By pursuing and achieving a functionally bilingual capacity, the National Council of the YMCAs has set an example for all community groups in Canada. I take pride in the fact that the federal government has played a major role in promoting and supporting this objective.

The opening up of new horizons through the development of Canadian studies has been one of your program initiatives which I have found especially important in increasing a greater understanding by Canadians of Canadians. The Montreal YMCA's Urban Animation Program, encompassing history, art, architecture, museology, and photography is but one example.

Let me take a moment to speak about Canadian studies, and the role which voluntary organizations may play in relation to their expansion. The Canadian Studies program began modestly in the Department of the Secretary of State in 1978, with grants to 3 national associations - the Canada Studies Foundation, the Association of Canadian Studies, and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. Their work has been highly successful. It has become evident, however, that a more diverse mechanism for the development and diffusion of Canadian Studies is required.

With the many stresses which come to bear upon citizens in this era of rapid change, it is essential that Canadians have a greater understanding of Canada's history, environment, geography, and the various issues which face our country. Government is now examining ways of calling upon the vast resources of the voluntary sector in the diffusion of knowledge about Canada.

Many large voluntary organizations have linkages with academic institutions, and provide facilities and course development in the educational field. The challenge of providing centres for Canadian studies is one which could be jointly addressed by academic institutions and the voluntary sector. I would be very happy to see that kind of cooperation take place to ensure a greater diffusion of knowledge about Canada. Once again, this is an area where greater participation will engender greater knowledge, and a heightened appreciation of being Canadian.

In a related way, there is a role for the voluntary sector in regard to recurrent education for certain groups of persons who are not inclined to go to traditional academic institutions. For instance, statistics for the 1970s show that 250,000 immigrant women speak neither of Canada's official languages. Voluntary organizations can provide encouragement to such women to use their facilities and resources.

As I said to the Coalition of National Voluntary Organizations in January, I feel that the national voluntary sector has a great capacity to assist in the creation of a fuller Canadianism, particularly since the voluntary sector is a vital trans-Canada link. We think of the railway, with its bands of steel joining the country from sea to sea and what it has meant to our economy and our sense of being one nation. Still more important, however, is the living link

uniting this country - made up of thousands of persons dedicated to voluntary service. This is the link which is the most vital for our national growth, since without the capabilities and resources of volunteers, those other links, the railways, would be no more than pieces of steel and railway ties. In that sense, the driving of the last spike was really the driving of the first spike, since it helped to make possible trans-Canadian communication at the human level - the level where communication counts most.

My belief is that the achievement of your potential, as an organization, is accomplished more through these human resources than through any other means. Your potential as the YMCA of Canada will only be realized if the enthusiasm and talents of your members are utilized and channelled. As you seek your present and future leaders you will want to identify from among the many those who have the necessary strengths and the necessary skills to carry out your wide ranging programs.

The participation of women through the YMCA and the joint YM-YW has been an essential element in your organization's growth. My Department has recognized the importance of women's voluntary organizations through a tripling of financial support to women's groups. The Women's Program of the Department of the Secretary of State is now involved in the determination of

how to divide this increased support among so many worthwhile women's organizations.

I have spoken at some length about participation and how it plays such a key role in developing a greater sense of belonging to Canada. Your organization has pioneered in the field of participation, and you are still pioneering. You are able to do that because you have remained relevant.

I want now to speak about the search for greater relevance, which is faced by every voluntary organization. It is achieved partly through leadership.

Our country needs leadership in social issues - leadership originating in the grassroots. The democratic process is strengthened immeasurably when voluntary organizations assume leadership roles in their communities on matters of social policy. As advocate Minister on voluntary action, I am anxious to develop some mechanisms to ensure that policy options developed in the voluntary sector are given a comprehensive and full hearing in the halls of Government.

An example is the Give and Take tax proposal which was developed by the Coalition of National Voluntary Organizations. I have arranged for an interdepartmental committee to study the proposal in depth.

It is clearly a concern of the voluntary sector. It is a subject which I undertook to monitor very closely and I intend to do that.

I think that it is important for me to tell you this, because you in turn, as leaders of the YMCA, will be responsible for letting your membership know that their views, as put forward in proposals, are essential to the functioning of government. I am counting on you to help overcome the negative feeling that has existed from time to time - that governing occurs from the top down and not from the grassroots upwards. With your help, it can be made apparent that government requires the input of ideas, and talents from all levels and sections of society.

Your search for greater relevance lies too in your reaction to change, as exemplified by the technological revolution.

No voluntary organization can ignore the effects of modern technology. It is a subject which I have thought about in some depth, in connection with Canada's own Telidon, developed within the Department of Communications, and achieving world-wide success. Telidon is, of course, the technological innovation which has the ability to link people and information, and will soon be a household word such as "telephone" or "radio". It seems hard for us to realize that there was a time, and really not that long ago, when those words were unknown in any language.

You may be interested in considering some of the ways in which Telidon's information dissemination capacity will

impact on voluntary organizations. It has countless possibilities for linking information to organizations. Let's take a practical example - the sudden arrival in Canada of a large number of refugees, such as the Boat People. Some confusion existed in the pre-Telidon period when various organizations were genuinely unaware, except by word of mouth or telephone, of what other community organizations were doing. In a sense, Telidon can become an adjunct to umbrella community service organizations in providing comprehensive information to constituent groups. It requires of course, cooperation in "feeding the computer", which one of these days may become as normal and prosaic as "feeding the cat".

Officials at the Department of Communications are studying ways in which voluntary sector needs can be met through technology such as Telidon. We will be requesting your assistance in highlighting for us those areas where this sort of innovation will serve your needs. I am counting on voluntary organizations to investigate this area and to let us know where they feel that government could help.

Your relevance also centres on the responsibilities which Canadians should take, as world citizens, in international development. Your initiatives at the international level have been diverse, ranging from helping victims of earthquakes, to promoting the resolution of world issues such as a disarmament, and third-world poverty, to resettling refugees from war-torn

areas. By looking beyond national boundaries to the international community, you are helping Canada's role abroad, and assisting in the carrying out of our international responsibilities as a nation. The Prime Minister has displayed a great interest in the responsibility which Canada bears to the global community, and takes the view that one of our most important national goals is to be open to the world beyond our own boundaries.

We tend to think of the problems of the third world as insuperable, as being shaped by the facts of geography, climate and history. The attitude of "There's nothing we can do to eradicate poverty" is prevalent. Voluntarism has a role to carry out in fighting such negative attitudes, which, because of their partial truth, are difficult to combat. The Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, "North-South", chaired by Willy Brandt, makes the observation that "The extent to which the international system will be made more equitable is essentially a matter for political decision." If that is the case, then there is a need to improve Canadians' knowledge and understanding of international issues. Voluntary organizations can be one means of creating this greater awareness. There is a challenge to influence public opinion intelligently and responsibly. It is a challenge which you have accepted.

The Parliamentary Task Force on North-South Relations, chaired by Herb Breau, Member of Parliament for Gloucester,

reported to the House of Commons last year on the Relations Between Developed and Developing Countries. One portion of that report referred to the role of non-governmental organizations. I would like to quote from that report.

"One of the most encouraging and exciting developments has been the appearance and vigorous health of a wide variety of Canadian non-governmental organizations. In our hearings we have been impressed by the imagination and commitment NGOs bring to the task of development, and, in particular, their concern for the poorest people in the developing countries. We are struck by the fact that at a time of recession in Canada private contributions to these organizations have risen considerably."

The Task Force Report went on to recommend that Government direct an increased share of Official Development Assistance to support the activities of Non-Governmental Organizations.

In July, we are approaching a climax in the North-South dialogue, with the holding of the Economic Summit in Ottawa. The Voluntary sector can be an important player in the dialogue and its follow-up, and I hope that this is a challenge which you will want to address with all your enthusiasm, talent, and compassion.

There is one last point I would like to make in regard to moving towards a greater relevance. That relates to

the task of spelling out your mandate, developing it in full consultation with members, and responding to needs expressed by the membership.

An example from ancient history will serve to illustrate the point. In 335 B.C., when Alexander the Great began his great crusade, he expanded Macedonian civilization through the Greek City states, through Egypt, Persia, Arabia, Afghanistan, and southern India. His Macedonian warriors, supplemented by Persian and Iranian soldiers, followed Alexander through famine, pestilence, and the most forbidding desert and mountainous terrain on earth. They followed him at first, because he had a cause - namely to avenge wrongs to his father, Philip, who had been assassinated; they followed him later for the glory of establishing a far-flung Empire. But they balked finally, and refused to follow him further, because after making himself conqueror of most of the known world, his generals and men could see no purpose in mile after mile of new hardships. He had failed to show them the relevance of his continuing cause. As a result, he was forced to turn back, embittered, a mere 600 miles from the eastern sea which marked the edge of the known world. The explorer's dream was shattered, and he knew all too well that it could have been realized.

The message from this story, is of course, the need to establish the relevance of your goals and to ensure that your membership is involved in shaping and sharing your mandate.

With the cooperation of your membership, your goals will not be blocked through lack of understanding or commitment.

The 1980s will be the decade when Canadians come to a richer understanding of who we are, and what our role can be in the community, the nation and the world. The debate on the constitution has increased our awareness of the fact that a nation is not static, and that we, as citizens, shape its dynamism. In the last analysis, it is what we do in the community which affects what we do in the nation and in the world. The YMCA is a powerful impetus for the kind of participation which will create that dynamism. With your network extending from Victoria to St. John's and from Niagara Falls to Frobisher Bay, you present a formidable mechanism for building a stronger sense of belonging to Canada. I invite you to move forward toward that goal.

Thank you.

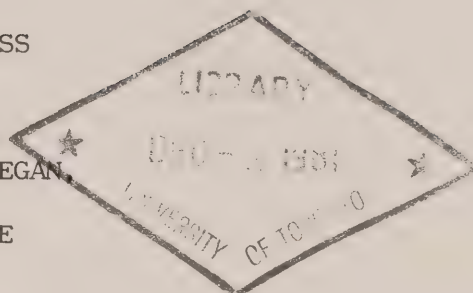
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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS

BY

THE HON. GERALD A. REGAN,

SECRETARY OF STATE



THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

November 17, 1981

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House of Commons Debates

VOLUME 124 • NUMBER 257 • 1st SESSION • 32nd PARLIAMENT

Hon. Gerald Regan (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker,

I would like to talk about the question of post-secondary education, which I think is a subject of considerable importance and of interest to many people. Canada is at a stage in its history where fundamental choices must be made with respect to the direction that our colleges and universities are heading. I think we have to stand back and examine what skills and general learning we want our young people, and indeed people of other ages who return to education, to derive from their years at university or community college. The choices of which I have spoken must be made by the colleges and universities themselves as well as by individual students and faculty members. At the governmental level, the Constitution gives primary responsibility for education to the provinces, but I am sure every member of this House will quickly

recognize that our colleges and universities are national as well as provincial bodies. They are an asset to the nation as a whole.

For a university to achieve any success at all in achieving its primary purposes, it must be more than provincial in its nature. These universities provide strong links among the regions of Canada and with the international community. For these reasons, as well as its involvement in areas such as research, official languages in education and occupational training, the federal government has for some time played a growing and important role in post-secondary education.

This budget marks an important milestone in support by the federal government of post-secondary education and of human resource development generally. It allows us to get on with the job of strengthening the structure of federal support of post-secondary education and human resource development generally. I include under the term of human resource development, federal support of students and support of the colleges and universities in carrying out their central responsibility for creating and transmitting knowledge and critical capacity across a broad spectrum of disciplines as well as for their professional and more occupationally related programs.

During the past year, there has been intensive discussion on the future of post-secondary education and human resource development in our country. Much of this discussion has centred, of course, around the activities of two very important parliamentary task forces; one on provincial and federal fiscal arrangements, the other on employment opportunities in the 1980s. The reports of these two task forces are based on a wide spectrum of views expressed by individuals and groups from across our country. As well, a number of conferences and studies have explored the financing of post-secondary education in the future.

During this period of consultation and discussion, a growing understanding has emerged throughout Canada that a major review is needed of the ways in which the colleges and universities which are faced with financial uncertainty are to maintain excellence in their core undertaking of creating and disseminating knowledge. Similarly, a review is needed of the way in which Canadians are to be provided with the knowledge, skills and critical capacity that they will need in order to take full advantage of the opportunities which will be offered by Canada in the eighties and the nineties.

The challenges facing the educational and training system are considerable. Demographic change suggests that the participation of young persons in post-secondary education may slow down and decline over the next decade. If that happens, there will be new demands in areas of continuing education and in the retraining of mature persons. Projections indicate that demand for occupational skills will likely change markedly in the 1980s.

This brings me to what I consider a very important point. Many people today feel they should only be concerned about training and education that is directed at a particular trade or skill. I do not believe that is correct. We are told by the experts that technological change occurs at such a rate today that

many people who enter the work force may have to be retrained two, three or four times for other occupations during the span of their 40 years of work because of technological change doing away with the opportunities provided in their first or second chosen field.

I believe very firmly that a broadly-based general education for as many of our citizens as possible provides the best base upon which retraining can be undertaken. I contend that those people who have had as much general education as possible, liberal arts education, for example, are better equipped to take retraining in unrelated skills compared to the field they were formerly in.

I am also constantly reminded of the fact that in this century the United States, as a result of its higher per capita number of university graduates than other countries, has been a leader in technological innovation.

I think the value of education can be found in many ways. I believe we would be dead in the water, as we say in shipping, if we allowed general learning to be eroded. That is not to say that there is not much more that needs to be done. Emphasis will have to be placed on research and the training of researchers in the universities if Canada is to have the capacity to meet its research and development targets. Major demands will likely be placed on colleges and universities to produce graduates who are able to operate effectively in both our official languages. In this respect, I do not know of anything more important in relation to employment opportunities.

For example, if you look in the newspapers of any major city in this country—and I am not talking about government employment advertising, I am talking about the private sector—there are more and more cases in which having a command of both official languages will result in obtaining a better chance of employment, and in many instances it is an absolute prerequisite for obtaining a job.

Important challenges still remain for the educational system in the area of Canadian knowledge and understanding. Technology is bringing about significant changes in the nature of education and training itself. Major institutional adjustments will be needed as a result of the blurring of lines of demarcation among education, work, training, culture and communications.

These challenges which we face in the development of our human resources are becoming widely understood. There is an equally widespread confidence, I think, among interested

groups and individuals that we can successfully meet these challenges, but there is no tendency to underestimate the problem of doing so. The federal government intends to maintain its financial commitment to human resource development and to strengthen the way that support is provided for that area.

In recent weeks there have been those who questioned the federal government's commitment to post-secondary education. They predicted massive cutbacks in federal spending in this area. Advertisements were circulated and those claims were made before the budget came out. The budget has

proved, as I have stated since becoming Secretary of State, that those fears are groundless. In particular, I believe the advertisements by the Conservative party in campus newspapers did a great disservice to students in colleges and universities by raising such needless fears. I also say, from the point of view of practical politics, that the Conservative party was short-sighted because they have harmed their credibility on the campus to a considerable degree as a result of the students discovering that these were groundless claims.

The federal strategy for strengthening its support of post-secondary education in the eighties can be stated under three headings. The first heading is strengthening federal programs and policies directed to specific national objectives, particularly in providing Canadians with the knowledges and skills needed to exploit the many opportunities offered by our developing economy, in strengthening support of research, in strengthening programs related to official languages in education and to Canadian knowledge, and in support of students and trainees with respect to accessibility, equity and mobility.

The second heading is maintaining a significant level of federal indirect support of the post-secondary infrastructure through the provinces, the students, and the institutions when this is appropriate, given the nature of the federal role. Such indirect support would be provided in a way that ensures accountability to the Parliament of Canada and that money from federal taxpayers is used in the manner indicated. There have been cases where, unfortunately, this has not occurred. I believe that in the negotiations with reference to the future of post-secondary education and the financing thereof in this country, these are matters that must be strengthened and stressed by the Government of Canada.

The third heading is strengthening the mechanisms for effective decision-making and wider participation.

I wonder if I might now comment on each of the elements of this strategy. The first element I referred to is to strengthen federal support of manpower, social and other specific national objectives.

In his presentation to the parliamentary task force on federal-provincial relations, the then secretary of state began the process of defining specific national objectives. The national objectives that should go with federal participation in the cost of post-secondary education that he identified at that time have been well received and appeared to be a solid base on which to build federal policy and programs in the eighties. I intend in the near future to issue a somewhat revised statement

of objectives that takes into account the comments we received on those that had been previously made and which I think will provide for more public input into our approach. I then plan to consult with interested groups and individuals with respect to these revised objectives, with respect to the basic principles that underlie federal policy and programs in support of post-secondary education, and also with respect to other matters relating to the achievement of national objectives in the area of education and human resource development.

In some areas we are already starting the process of strengthening federal programs in support of these national objectives. A federal-provincial task force has already identified ways in which student aid programs need improvement. I will be meeting soon with my provincial counterparts to discuss federal official languages in education programs. Development will continue in these areas along with an overall review of all federal programs in support of human resource development.

The second element of the strategy is to maintain strong federal support of the post-secondary infrastructure. The achievement of human resource development objectives ultimately rests on strong, autonomous and flexible colleges and universities, on a post-secondary system which itself has the incentives and means to provide opportunity for the development of individual talent and the pursuit of national objectives.

Given our constitutional arrangements, it is primarily the job of the provinces to provide the needed financing of the post-secondary infrastructure. However, the federal government, in the interests of ensuring a high standard of post-secondary education and training across the country, has over a considerable number of years supported and will continue to support that infrastructure.

This support has been delivered via the provinces, and also through direct support to students and, where appropriate, given the nature of the federal role, to post-secondary institutions themselves. With respect to support via the provinces, the government finds considerable merit in the recommendation of the parliamentary task force on federal-provincial fiscal arrangements that the post-secondary and health portions of the established programs financing arrangements be separated into individual programs, and that federal financing earmarked for each program area not be used for other purposes. That not only will result in the intentions of those in this House who vote money in approving budgets being carried out, but it will assure Canadians that dollars intended for education are not being diverted at the provincial level for other purposes.

A review is needed of the amount of federal support that should be provided in this way. Under established programs financing, the federal share of post-secondary infrastructure financing has been rising rapidly. In some provinces the provincial share has been decreasing sharply. We must seriously examine arrangements that have the effect of shifting the burden of infrastructure financing away from the provinces, which have primary responsibility for education, and to the federal government.

If an increasing amount of available federal funds is being used in this manner, correspondingly less can be spent on vital national human resource development programs that can by their very nature only be provided by the federal government. The budget notes that unless satisfactory progress is made by March 31, 1983 in jointly developing better federal-provincial arrangements in the areas of education and human resource development, the government could be forced to freeze future per capita EPF cash transfers for post-secondary education at

the 1982-83 level or forced to follow other methods of providing support to post-secondary education. I want to express confidence that it is quite possible for the provinces and the national government together to work out satisfactory answers to these problems so that we can achieve a new agreement and a plan for improving the funding and the very structure of post-secondary education before the deadline of April, 1983.

The final element of the strategy involves taking action at the federal level to work towards more effective decision-making and a wider participation in developing policies relating to post-secondary education and human resource development. As part of this review, the process of policy-making in the area of human resource development has too often suffered from a lack of mechanisms whereby all the relevant interests could be represented. The two parliamentary task force reports that I referred to have addressed the problem of decision-making in this area. The recommendations of these reports will be considered very carefully.

In the immediate future I am undertaking a comprehensive review of federal support of post-secondary education. I plan to consult with provinces, with post-secondary organizations and with student and faculty organizations with a view to establishing a means of allowing all parties to have an input to federal policy in this area and with a view to ensuring that stronger national voices are brought to bear upon decision-making in the field of post-secondary education. I also want to say that we are keenly interested in encouraging a somewhat larger involvement by the private sector in post-secondary decision-making.

I would like to conclude by noting the same concern that has been expressed to me by students and representatives of colleges and universities about the future of the post-secondary education system in our country. They all know that there must be changes, that for the system to be relevant it can not stand on the status quo now any more than at any time in the past. It is a system that has grown and evolved as our needs as a nation required. There have been cutbacks in post-secondary spending in some provinces and there is evidence of deterioration in some aspects of the post-secondary capacity. The federal government recognizes the difficulties that are being faced and we are determined to help overcome them.

The federal government, the Government of Canada, will not cut back on the budget it devotes to human resource programs. It sees them as a great priority in relation to the future well being and wealth of our nation and our citizens.

Indeed, by making changes which ensure that federal funds actually reach the education system, and by encouraging others to maintain an equitable share in financing, federal action could increase the total funding devoted to human resource development in Canada. Further, the federal government is prepared to consider strengthening its programs to aid those students that are faced with legitimate financial difficulties. In times of inflation that can be a special problem.

I also want to note that I am concerned, from a point of view of accessibility, with regional inequities and the fact that there are regions and provinces in Canada which have not been able, for one reason or another, to produce as high a percentage of university graduates or highly skilled people as others. I think that is a problem that needs to be addressed.

I also think that the formula under which money has been distributed has perhaps been unfair to some provinces that have tended to have an influx of students from other areas. Adjustment is inevitable and needed. The post-secondary system must remain flexible to meet the changing needs of the Canadian economy and of society.

All developed countries today are facing important challenges with respect to human resource development, not just Canada. The same type of reassessment and policy review is happening in many countries. At a recent OECD conference, for example, participants discussed common challenges resulting from tightened budgets in post-secondary institutions, from ensuring that the post-secondary education remains responsive to the needs of society, and from the growing demands for continuing education for adults.

In Canada, we are addressing these challenges and opportunities from a special position of strength. Our post-secondary system underwent a remarkable and successful expansion in the 1960s and, despite setbacks in some areas, the system remains basically strong. Canada is a leader in many of the technologies that are changing the nature of education of training. With our abundance of natural resources, the economic benefits of a qualified labour force are especially strong in Canada.

In cultural terms, the benefits of a strong education system are also especially high in Canada, where graduates are able to live and work in a multicultural, bilingual country that has a strong network of social and cultural institutions. The strengthening of Canada as a nation and the enhanced well-being of Canadians depends on the success of our collective approach to human resource development. The federal government is determined to play a strong and responsible role in this collective endeavour. As I have stressed, we are anxious that the provinces also meet their responsibilities.

The message from this budget on education is that the Government of Canada is committed to the improvement of post-secondary education. It places a high priority on post-secondary education and is determined to elicit a similar commitment from the provinces.

Il faut revoir le montant des subventions fédérales qui devraient être accordées de cette façon. En vertu du financement de l'infrastructure postsecondaire a rapidement augmenté. Dans certaines provinces, la participation du gouvernement provincial a nettement diminué. Il faut étudier attentivement les arrangements qui permettent aux provinces de se débarrasser de ce fardeau sur le dos du gouvernement fédéral alors que l'éducation relève d'elles avant tout.

Plus on utilise de fonds fédéraux ainsi, moins on en a consacré aux programmes nationaux essentiels de développement des ressources humaines qui, de par leur nature même, ne peuvent venir que du gouvernement fédéral. Le budget note que si, au 31 mars 1983, il n'y a pas eu de progrès satisfaisants dans l'élaboration conjointe d'accords fédéraux-provinciaux dans les domaines de l'éducation et du développement des ressources humaines, le gouvernement pourrait être contraint de bloquer les futurs paiements de transfert par habitant pour l'enseignement postsecondaire au niveau de 1982-1983 ou d'adopter d'autres méthodes pour soutenir l'enseignement à ce niveau. Je suis persuadé que les provinces et le gouvernement national pourront trouver ensemble des solutions satisfaisantes à ces problèmes afin que nous puissions conclure un nouvel accord et établir un programme pour améliorer le financement et les structures mêmes de l'enseignement postsecondaire avant l'échéance d'avril 1983.

Finalement, le gouvernement fédéral devra s'efforcer de prendre des décisions plus efficaces et inviter le plus grand nombre d'intéressés possible à participer à l'élaboration de mesures relatives à l'enseignement postsecondaire et au développement des ressources humaines. Cette révision a porté, entre autres, sur le processus décisionnel dans le domaine du développement des ressources humaines, car, trop souvent, on manque de mécanismes permettant à tous les intéressés de participer à ce processus. Les deux rapports des groupes de travail parlementaires déjà mentionnés traitent des problèmes ici en jeu. Les recommandations contenues dans ces rapports feront l'objet d'un examen approfondi.

Pour l'immédiate, j'entreprends une étude détaillée sur l'aide que le gouvernement fédéral accorde pour l'enseignement postsecondaire. J'ai l'intention de consulter les provinces, les organismes d'enseignement supérieur, ainsi que les organisations d'étudiants et de professeurs, en vue d'établir une formule qui donne à tous les intéressés la possibilité de participer à l'élaboration de la politique fédérale dans ce domaine et de faire en sorte qu'une influence nationale plus forte s'exerce sur le processus de la prise des décisions dans le domaine de l'enseignement postsecondaire. J'ajoute ici que nous désirons vivement renforcer la participation du secteur privé dans ce processus.

Je termine en vous faisant part d'une chose que m'ont dite des étudiants et des représentants de collèges et d'universités au sujet de l'avenir du système d'enseignement postsecondaire au Canada. Tous savent que des changements s'imposent, que pour répondre aux besoins de son temps le régime ne peut se cantonner dans l'immobilisme, pas plus aujourd'hui que dans le passé. C'est un système qui s'est développé et qui a évolué à mesure que les besoins du pays l'ont exigé. Il y a eu réduction des dépenses consacrées à l'enseignement postsecondaire dans certaines provinces et certains aspects du système montrent des signes de dégradation. Le gouvernement fédéral reconnaît les difficultés auxquelles on fait face et nous sommes déterminés à aider à les surmonter.

Le gouvernement fédéral, le gouvernement du Canada, n'effectuera pas de coupures dans le budget qu'il consacre aux programmes de développement des ressources humaines. Il y voit une grande priorité pour assurer dans l'avenir le bien-être et la richesse de notre pays et de nos concitoyens. En effet, en opérant ces changements qui assureront que des fonds fédéraux seront véritablement consacrés à l'enseignement, et en encourageant les autres paliers de gouvernement à maintenir une part équitable du financement, les initiatives fédérales pourraient faire augmenter l'ensemble des fonds consacrés au développement des ressources humaines au Canada. De plus, le gouvernement fédéral est disposé à envisager de raffermir ses programmes pour aider les étudiants qui sont aux prises avec des difficultés financières légitimes. En temps d'inflation, cela peut poser un problème particulier.

Pour ce qui est des possibilités d'accès à l'enseignement postsecondaire, je tiens à souligner que les disparités régionales sont un motif de préoccupation, du fait que, pour une raison ou une autre, certaines régions et provinces canadiennes n'ont pu produire dans une même proportion que d'autres des diplômés d'université et des travailleurs hautement spécialisés. Voilà un autre problème à résoudre.

J'estime en outre que la formule de répartition de l'aide financière a peut-être été injuste envers certaines provinces vers lesquelles les étudiants d'autres régions ont afflué. Un ajustement est inévitable et nécessaire. Le régime d'enseignement postsecondaire doit demeurer souple s'il veut répondre aux besoins changeants de l'économie et de la société canadiennes.

Tous les pays industrialisés font face à des défis majeurs dans le domaine du développement des ressources humaines. Le Canada n'est pas un cas isolé. Les pays sont nombreux qui doivent aussi réévaluer et modifier leur politique. Lors d'une récente conférence des pays de l'OCDE, par exemple, les participants ont discuté des problèmes communs des ressources humaines et des budgets des établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire, en quête de solutions qui leur permettent de continuer à répondre aux besoins de la société et à la demande croissante de services d'enseignement aux adultes.

Au Canada, nous sommes en très bonne posture pour relever ces défis et pour tirer parti des possibilités qui s'offrent à nous. Notre système postsecondaire s'est développé de façon remarquable dans les années soixante et malgré certains revers, il demeure solide dans l'ensemble. Le Canada fait figure de pionnier dans bien des techniques qui font évoluer l'enseignement et la formation. Grâce à l'abondance de ses ressources naturelles et aux avantages économiques que lui procurent une population active qualifiée, le Canada est extrêmement fort.

Sur le plan culturel, nous profitons des avantages qu'offrent un système éducatif fort, de niveau élevé et un pays où les diplômés peuvent vivre et travailler dans un milieu multiculturel et bilingue, doté d'un solide réseau d'institutions à caractère socio-culturel. Le resserrement des liens nationaux et la prospérité des Canadiens dépendent du succès de notre attitude collective à l'égard de la mise en valeur des ressources humaines. Le gouvernement fédéral est décidé à jouer un rôle important et à prendre ses responsabilités dans cette expérience collective. Je l'ai déjà signalé, nous tenons beaucoup à ce que les provinces assument leurs responsabilités.

Le message qu'il faut retirer de ce budget en matière d'enseignement, c'est que le gouvernement du Canada s'engage à améliorer l'enseignement postsecondaire. Il lui accorde une haute priorité. Il est décidé à exiger que les provinces en fassent autant.

Il reste encore beaucoup à faire dans l'enseignement au niveau de la connaissance et de la compréhension du pays. La technologie amène d'importants changements dans la nature de l'enseignement et dans la formation elle-même. Les frontières s'estompent entre l'enseignement, le travail, la formation, la culture et les télécommunications, et cela va imposer de grands aménagements institutionnels.

Les défis que cela pose en matière de développement de nos ressources humaines sont de plus en plus compris. Mais je pense que les milieux et les personnes concernés ont bon espoir que nous réussirons à relever ces défis, sans pour autant sous-estimer la difficulté de la chose. Le gouvernement fédéral n'entend pas réduire sa participation financière au développement des ressources humaines, bien au contraire.

Ces dernières semaines, on a entendu mettre en doute la détermination du gouvernement fédéral à poursuivre son effort dans le domaine de l'enseignement postsecondaire. On a prédit des coupures massives de dépenses fédérales. Des annonces ont paru, on a entendu dire cela avant la présentation du budget. Mais le budget a démontré, comme je l'ai dit depuis mon arrivée au Secrétariat d'Etat, que ces craintes étaient injustifiées. Je pense en particulier que les annonces insérées par le parti conservateur dans les journaux universitaires n'étaient pas de matière à aider les étudiants des collèges et universités chez qui elles ont suscité des craintes inutiles. Je dirai également, du point de vue du réalisme politique, que le parti conservateur a agi de façon irréfléchie parce que cette campagne lui a fait perdre beaucoup de sa crédibilité sur les campus, quand les étudiants ont découvert que ces craintes étaient injustifiées.

La stratégie élaborée par le gouvernement fédéral en vue d'accroître son aide à l'éducation postsecondaire pour les années 80, comprend trois offensives majeures. La première vise à affermir les programmes et politiques axés sur des objectifs nationaux précis, par exemple à offrir aux Canadiens les connaissances et les compétences nécessaires pour tirer profit des nombreuses perspectives qu'offre notre économie en expansion, à favoriser la recherche et le développement en renforçant les programmes ayant trait aux langues officielles à l'éducation et aux connaissances générales et à venir en aide aux étudiants et aux stagiaires en favorisant l'accessibilité, l'égalité et la mobilité.

L'objectif de la deuxième offensive est de maintenir à un niveau élevé l'appui indirect offert aux provinces, aux étudiants et aux établissements en matière d'éducation postsecondaire, en respectant la nature du rôle fédéral. Les mécanismes prévus doivent permettre de rendre des comptes au Parlement du Canada et de s'assurer ainsi que l'argent des contribuables est dépensé de la manière indiquée. Ce ne fut pas toujours le cas, malheureusement. Il importe, selon moi, que le gouvernement du Canada insiste sur cette nécessité dans toutes les négociations ayant trait à l'avenir de l'éducation postsecondaire et aux formules de financement.

En troisième lieu, il faut renforcer les mécanismes favorisant une prise de décisions efficace et une participation plus large. Je voudrais maintenant passer au détail de ces trois éléments de notre stratégie. Le premier élément que j'ai mentionné consiste à accroître l'aide fédérale relativement aux ressources humaines, aux objectifs sociaux et autres objectifs nationaux.

Dans son témoignage devant le groupe de travail parlementaire sur les relations fédérales-provinciales, le secrétaire d'Etat de l'époque avait commencé à définir des objectifs nationaux précis. L'objectif national inhérent à la participation fédérale aux frais de l'éducation postsecondaire, tel que défini à ce moment-là, a été généralement bien accueilli et semble constituer une bonne base à toute politique et programme fédéral pour les années 80. Je compte publier d'ici peu un nouvel exposé des objectifs qui tiendront compte des avis exprimés et permettront au public de faire connaître son point de vue à nouveau. Je songe également à consulter les groupes de personnes intéressés au sujet des principes de base de la politique et des programmes fédéraux ainsi qu'au sujet d'autres questions ayant trait aux objectifs nationaux dans le domaine de l'éducation et du développement des ressources humaines.

Dans certains domaines, nous avons déjà commencé à renforcer les programmes fédéraux à l'appui de ces objectifs nationaux. Un groupe de travail fédéral-provincial a déjà reconnu les moyens d'améliorer les programmes d'aide aux étudiants. Je dois rencontrer prochainement mes homologues provinciaux pour discuter des programmes fédéraux concernant les langues officielles dans l'enseignement. Nous entendons aller de l'avant dans ces domaines, en plus de procéder à une évaluation globale de tous les programmes fédéraux visant à favoriser la mise en valeur des ressources humaines.

Le deuxième volet de la stratégie consiste à maintenir l'appui fédéral solide à l'infrastructure postsecondaire. La pleine réalisation des objectifs en ce qui a trait à la mise en valeur des ressources humaines dépend en dernière analyse d'universités et de collèges forts, autonomes et souples, d'un régime d'enseignement secondaire supérieur qui dispose des incitations et des moyens de favoriser le perfectionnement des talents individuels et la poursuite des objectifs nationaux.

Compte tenu des accords constitutionnels, les provinces ont pour premier rôle d'assurer à l'infrastructure postsecondaire le financement dont elle a besoin. Cependant, le gouvernement fédéral, afin de maintenir l'enseignement secondaire supérieur au plus haut niveau partout au Canada, a dû pendant de très nombreuses années appuyer cette infrastructure et il continuera de le faire.

Cette aide a été accordée par l'intermédiaire des provinces et aussi sous forme de subventions offertes directement aux étudiants et, aux établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire proprement dits, lorsque cela se justifie, compte tenu de la nature du rôle du gouvernement fédéral. Pour ce qui est des subventions accordées par l'intermédiaire des provinces, le gouvernement trouve la recommandation du groupe de travail parlementaire sur les arrangements fiscaux fédéraux-provinciaux très intéressante; d'après ce groupe de travail, il faudrait faire des arrangements financiers distincts pour les programmes relatifs à l'enseignement postsecondaire et à la santé et stipuler qu'une certaine somme doit être affectée à ces programmes et non pas servir à financer d'autres programmes, qui approuvent ces subventions à la Chambre seront respectés mais les Canadiens ne seront pas détournés par les provinces à d'autres fins.

L'hon. Gerald Regan (secrétaire d'Etat): Monsieur l'Orateur,

Je voudrais parler de la question de l'enseignement postsecondaire, sujet, je crois, qui revêt beaucoup d'importance et qui présente beaucoup d'intérêt pour bien des personnes. Le Canada est arrivé à la croisée des chemins et il doit faire des choix fondamentaux quant à l'orientation qu'il convient de donner à ses collèges et universités. Je pense que nous devons nous demander et examiner quelles compétences et quels bagages nous voulons que nos jeunes et, en fait, les gens de tous âges acquièrent quand ils vont pour la première fois ou qu'ils retournent plus tard à l'université ou dans un collège communautaire. Ces choix dont je viens de parler, il appartient aux collèges et universités eux-mêmes de les faire ainsi qu'aux étudiants et aux professeurs. Au niveau de l'Etat, ce sont les provinces qui, en vertu de la constitution, sont compétentes en matière d'enseignement mais tous les députés, j'en suis sûr reconnaîtreont rapidement que nos collèges et universités sont des organismes nationaux aussi bien que provinciaux. Ils font partie de l'actif de tout le pays.

Pour qu'une université parvienne à atteindre ses objectifs premiers, il faut qu'elle soit plus qu'une valeur provinciale. Les universités assurent des liens solides avec les régions du Canada ainsi qu'avec la collectivité internationale. Pour ces raisons, ainsi qu'à cause de sa participation à des domaines comme la recherche, les langues officielles dans l'enseignement et la formation professionnelle, le gouvernement fédéral joue depuis quelque temps un rôle important et sans cesse croissant dans l'enseignement postsecondaire.

Ce budget marque un jalon important dans la politique de soutien que le gouvernement fédéral apporte à l'enseignement postsecondaire et à la mise en valeur des ressources humaines en général. Il nous permet de renforcer, dans sa structure, l'appui que le gouvernement fédéral apporte à l'enseignement postsecondaire et à la mise en valeur des ressources humaines en général. Par mise en valeur des ressources humaines, j'entends l'aide que le gouvernement fédéral assure aux étudiants et celle qu'il procure aux collèges et universités pour leur permettre de créer et de transmettre des connaissances et des capacités critiques dans une vaste gamme de disciplines ainsi que dans le cadre de programmes professionnels ou d'avantageux accès sur l'emploi.

Au cours de l'année dernière, des discussions approfondies ont eu lieu sur la question de l'enseignement postsecondaire et de la mise en valeur des ressources humaines de notre pays. Bien entendu, une bonne partie de ce débat a eu lieu dans le cadre des activités de deux groupes d'étude parlementaire très importants: l'un sur les arrangements fiscaux entre les gouvernements provinciaux et le gouvernement fédéral et l'autre sur les perspectives d'emploi au cours des années 80. Les rapports de ces deux groupes d'étude ont été établis à partir d'un très grand nombre d'opinions exprimées par des particuliers et des groupes de tout notre pays. Par ailleurs, un certain nombre de conférences et d'études ont examiné la question du financement futur de l'enseignement postsecondaire.

Des défis de taille se posent dans le secteur de l'enseignement et de la formation. L'évolution démographique laisse entrevoir la diminution éventuelle du nombre des étudiants au niveau postsecondaire lors de la prochaine décennie. Le cas échéant, le secteur de l'éducation permanente et du recyclage des adultes aura à répondre à de nouvelles exigences. D'après les prévisions, la demande de compétences professionnelles subira des changements notables dans les années 80.

Ce qui m'amène à un point très important. Beaucoup de gens estiment ne devoir se préoccuper que de la formation et de l'enseignement axés sur une discipline ou un métier particuliers. Or le principe est faux. D'après les spécialistes, la technique évolue à un rythme tel de nos jours que beaucoup de nouveaux venus sur le marché du travail auront à se faire recycler deux, trois ou quatre fois dans d'autres métiers au cours de leurs quarante années de vie active, car avec la mise au point des nouvelles techniques disparaissent les perspectives d'emploi dans les domaines du premier ou du deuxième choix de ces travailleurs.

Je suis persuadé que pour faciliter tout recyclage éventuel, il suffirait de donner au plus grand nombre l'enseignement le plus général. A mon avis, ceux qui ont mené des études très générales, dans les arts libéraux par exemple, sont mieux équipés pour le recyclage dans une spécialisation tout autre que la leur.

Je n'oublie pas non plus qu'en ce siècle, à cause du très grand nombre, par rapport à d'autres pays, de leurs diplômés universitaires, les Etats-Unis occupent le premier rang dans le domaine de l'innovation technique.

La valeur de l'enseignement ressort à bien des égards. Nous nous retrouvons dans de bien mauvais draps si nous permettons la disparition progressive de l'enseignement général. Il reste encore beaucoup à faire, cela va sans dire. Il faudra favoriser nos universités et la formation de chercheurs dans nos universités si nous voulons donner au pays la capacité d'atteindre ses objectifs de recherche et de développement. Les collèges et les universités seront incités de plus belle à livrer des diplômés capables de travailler avec la même efficacité dans les deux langues officielles. A ce propos, je ne connais rien qui favorise autant le candidat à la recherche d'un emploi.

On voit par exemple dans les journaux de nos grandes villes—et je ne parle pas de celle du secteur privé—qu'il est de plus en plus fréquent que la maîtrise des deux langues officielles donne de meilleures chances de trouver du travail, dont elle constitue souvent une condition absolue.

NOTES POUR UNE ALLOCUTION

PRONONCÉE PAR

L'HONORABLE GERALD A. REGAN,

SECRÉTAIRE D'ÉTAT

CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES

Le 17 novembre 1981



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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

NOTES FOR A SPEECH
BY THE HONOURABLE BENOÎT BOUCHARD
SECRETARY OF STATE OF CANADA
TO

THE ASSOCIATION CULTURELLE FRANCO-CANADIENNE OF SASKATCHEWAN

NOVEMBER 16, 1985



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Dear Friends,

It is a great pleasure for me to have been invited to meet with you today, for two reasons: first, it gives me an opportunity to learn first-hand about your efforts to acknowledge with pride and with dignity your French identity and to have your rights respected; and second, I hope that together we can identify the support that the federal government could give you, as part of its program to provide francophones and anglophones with an equal opportunity to live and work in their own language. I outlined the main points of the government's approach at the Conference on Official Language Minorities last month.

Before going on to today's subject, and without straying too far into your history, which you know better than I, I would like to mention the name of Louis Riel, the centenary of whose death is being marked today. Louis Riel's courage, determination and faith in the future remain a great source of inspiration a hundred years after his death. Allow me to join you in paying tribute to this historic figure of Western Canada whose memory is still very much alive.

My presence here this evening is part of the contact-making and consultation process which I have been working to build with minority language communities across the country. The purpose of this process is to allow me to acquire an understanding of the desires, aspirations and difficulties of these communities and to involve them in the ongoing analysis of the issue of official languages in Canada which the federal government has undertaken.

Thus far, I have had discussions with the Fédération des francophones hors-Québec, Alliance Québec and a number of Francophone organizations in British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. These discussions have been extremely useful to me. I have yet to visit the Maritimes, although I plan to do so as soon as possible. I did, however, have the opportunity to meet with a number of representatives of the Acadian community at last month's conference.

It is in the context of this cross-Canada tour, which is, unfortunately, spread out over a longer period than might be wished and is further complicated by the fact that I am currently holding two ministerial positions, that I was anxious to meet with you and talk with you in person. In short, I am here to learn about your situation. Actually, our discussion has already begun, since I met with your executive late this afternoon. Another meeting is scheduled for tomorrow morning, at which I will be given a more detailed description of your desires and proposals.

I am, of course, eager to take advantage of this visit to remind you of the new impetus the current government intends to give to language reform, and then to highlight some of the possible applications that could serve to advance the cause of francophones in Saskatchewan. First of all, however, I would like to refer briefly to a number of preliminary considerations which I believe mark what I would call the change in mentality that has taken place with respect to the issue of languages in Canada in recent years.

Preliminary considerations

Since the great process of national consolidation represented by the federal government's legal recognition of our two official languages was begun, I believe that French Canadians across the country have gained a new awareness and acquired renewed vigor. Despite recurring difficulties - and I am not trying to downplay their importance - we have witnessed in general greater open-mindedness and efforts at understanding.

Intolerance or, rather, indifference, which is perhaps the most common form of resistance these days, is gradually being replaced by tolerance and even acceptance. I am talking here about the country as a whole; I am well aware that the process is not taking place at the same pace and with the same clarity everywhere. Our great country is a country of differences, of different regional patterns. This reality is all the more reason for me to gather information first-hand, region by region.

I am therefore counting on you to keep me informed and to suggest ways of translating our commitment to the ideal of linguistic equality across Canada into reality in your own communities.

A fresh start - the second step

It has been 16 years since language reform began in earnest, particularly with the conferring of legal status by federal legislation, and the time has now come to breathe fresh life into the language reform effort in order to ensure, as best we can, that francophones and anglophones enjoy an equal opportunity to live and work in their own language. We must make this reform "irreversible," as the Commissioner of Official Languages, Mr. D'Iberville Fortier, put it recently, and this conviction is wholeheartedly shared by the federal government.

At this point, I would like to reiterate the government's commitment, of which I spoke last month, to maintain and increase its support to official language communities. The first step in this process will be a review of federal official languages policies and programs, which the Prime Minister has asked two of my colleagues and myself to conduct, in order to bring them more closely in line with actual needs.

Of course, the first step of consolidating the progress made in the legal arena was essential, and clarifying the rights enshrined in the Charter is still a major priority. However, to put these legal rights into practice, we must also take a more down-to-earth approach and in so doing we cannot each go our separate ways. On the contrary, if we are to succeed we must work together as partners, devise a common course of action and avail ourselves of every opportunity to appeal to the good will of all concerned.

This was the thrust of the message put forward by the official language minorities during their conference. They urged us to adopt a comprehensive approach to the issue and to play a greater role in co-ordinating efforts in this area. Mr. Leblanc, President of the

Fédération des francophones hors-Québec, reminded us of this a little while ago when he urged us once again to take a broader view of the development of our official language communities in order to make this development a dynamic process that produces concrete results visible in the everyday lives of community members.

To this end, I plan to work closely with my colleagues, the Minister of Justice and the President of the Treasury Board, in conducting our review of official language policies. Furthermore, in keeping with the instructions we received from the Prime Minister, we will be guided in our work by your experience and suggestions. It is in this spirit that I am here today to consult with you.

Because of the division of powers, we must also work with the provinces to achieve our goals, starting with the provision of certain services in both official languages and, in the context in which we are dealing, the provision of French services in areas such as education, health and recreation. We shall undertake or continue discussions with the provinces in order to find the most appropriate and satisfactory ways of achieving these aims.

Naturally, we cannot expect immediate and identical results everywhere, but we shall avail ourselves of every opportunity to get our message across. We already have a useful tool that we intend to put to good use: the Protocol on Official Languages, which has been renewed until 1988, and the bilateral agreements signed with each of the provinces under the aegis of the protocol.

Still on the issue of federal-provincial co-operation, I should like to mention our intention to explore with Quebec various ways by which both governments could work together, through concrete initiatives, to advance the cause of the French-speaking community outside Quebec. To this end, we are currently examining with Quebec various options for making the educational television services of Radio-Québec available to minority French-language communities across Canada. I understand that officials from the federal Communications department and the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada will be consulting with you on this project in coming weeks.

Use of the French language should not be limited, for all intents and purposes, to schools, the courts and government services. We must work to make your goal of a fuller and richer texture of life in French-speaking communities across Canada a reality, and endeavor, to the best of our ability, to encourage other segments of society to participate in this community life. We must devise imaginative ways of highlighting the economic, social and cultural advantages that use of our two official languages can bring, and thereby strengthen our minority official-language communities. In short, the harmonious co-existence of two languages expands our horizons and enriches our lives. Together we must show how this can be done.

Although the key to the survival of the French language lies in our homes, school is where language is learned and, consequently, where attitudes are formed: society will benefit from the seeds for advancement sown here. That is why the federal government wishes to lay even greater emphasis on the importance of education, particularly first-language education for the minority, which is our priority. We would also like to encourage the majority to learn the second language, which would help to bridge the gap that divides the two solitudes, to borrow the title of a famous book.

This is how we envision setting in motion the second stage of linguistic renewal in Canada. Some would say that these are merely ephemeral principles and ideas. I can understand how they feel, since they have been waiting a long time and are anxious to see results. We share their concern and determination, and I can tell you that you should not have to wait long to see realistic options which will include concrete action. We are counting on you to help us formulate and implement these measures.

Saskatchewan

Here, in Saskatchewan, at my first meeting with your leaders, I was impressed by the vitality of your associations and by your determination, not only to assert your rights, but also to infuse your language and culture with vigor and impact. I am delighted to see this because it holds out promise for the future.

The challenge that awaits you is twofold: to rally your forces, which are relatively small in number and scattered over an enormous area, while maintaining your vigilance against the forces of disillusionment and resignation; and to convince your fellow citizens to understand and respect your identity and your efforts to preserve it. But I am well acquainted with your willpower, of which your conference is living proof.

To support your initiatives, the federal government is currently using various programs: support for court cases to clarify and implement constitutional provisions, notably those of the Charter of Rights, federal-provincial agreements and direct assistance. These measures must be applied concurrently rather than separately, so as to complement and reinforce one another.

The government respects your decision to seek a court ruling on the management of your schools. The request for funding that you have submitted will be examined under the broader program of assistance for court challenges, to be administered by the Canadian Council on Social Development. I was informed this week that the committee responsible for dealing with requests involving linguistic issues will be set up shortly and that all requests will be examined in the coming weeks so as to satisfy the legitimate and historic rights of all francophones outside Quebec.

It is important to continue our exchanges with the provincial government so that concrete progress can be made especially in education-related matters. It was only last week that officials of my department met with their provincial counterparts to discuss a variety of subjects, including the particular needs relating to the development of French-language education, the development of pedagogical resources, the expansion of Collège Mathieu, assistance for the establishment and reinforcement of French schools, and continuing education. We hope that these discussions will lead to concrete measures enabling us to make real progress. I personally have communicated to my provincial counterpart my willingness to increase federal contributions, commencing this year, for the advancement of Franco-Saskatchewanian education.

The federal government also undertakes to continue providing direct assistance to your organizations and communities so that your rights will be recognized and respected. Accordingly, my officials met recently with your representatives to discuss specific measures for the speediest possible resolution of the French-language education issue. As I mentioned a moment ago, we are waiting for the results of our discussions with the province, but I can further assure you that, circumstances permitting, we are prepared to support the priorities you have brought to our attention. Moreover, I have asked my officials to sit down with you again, once the discussions with the province are over, so that they can make specific recommendations to me on different forms of assistance that we could give you.

As an example of the assistance we are offering you for the implementation of initiatives specifically designed to reinforce your communities, I am pleased this evening to announce to you that I am prepared to give financial assistance to the development of a community centre in Debden. Attention should be drawn, in this project as in the case of the Bellevue Centre, to the participation of various federal departments, members of the community and the municipality.

Linguistic reform must of course move ahead in Saskatchewan as in all the other provinces. To do so, we shall have to be imaginative and find complementary solutions that are responsive to the circumstances; the foundation provided by the Charter, federal-provincial co-operation, the review of federal policy, and assistance to social and community development are all complementary factors that we must promote simultaneously.

Those, my friends, are the thoughts that I wanted to pass on to you this evening. I certainly have not addressed all the irritants, nor do I pretend to have ready-made solutions. It is you, the people who live here, who must propose solutions to us. Rather, I came to learn more about you, to listen to you, and to meet with you and your leaders, with whom I shall have the pleasure of continuing my discussions tomorrow.

It is my hope, however, that I have been able to convince you of the federal government's commitment, and of my commitment, to walk by your side, to encourage your initiatives and to support your efforts.

One last thought. Cultural and linguistic enrichment go hand in hand with excellence whether we are talking about language or other fields. Such enrichment must be rooted in education and will lead to full and complete participation in the life of our society. There is no doubt in my mind that this is within your reach, because I can sense here a pride in excellence - your pride!



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NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS BY
HON. BENOÎT BOUCHARD,
SECRETARY OF STATE OF CANADA
COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY - DEATH OF LOUIS RIEL
MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

NOVEMBER 16, 1985



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HON. BENOIT BOUCHARD,
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COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY - DEATH OF LOUIS RIEL
MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA - NOVEMBER 16, 1985

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I AM PLEASED TO BE WITH YOU TODAY AS YOU PAY
HOMMAGE TO A GREAT CANADIAN, A GREAT LEADER OF THE MÉTIS
PEOPLE. THE FACT THAT THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LOUIS RIEL
CONTINUES TO THIS DAY TO BE A FOCUS OF ATTENTION FOR SO MANY
INDIVIDUALS IS A TESTAMENT TO THE FERVOR OF THE CAUSE WHICH
LOUIS RIEL CHAMPIONED.

LOUIS RIEL HAS AN UNQUESTIONED PLACE IN CANADIAN
HISTORY. HE PROVIDED A RALLYING POINT FOR MÉTIS CANADIANS,
PROUD OF THEIR INDIAN AND FRENCH OR ENGLISH CANADIAN BLOOD
LINES, AND ANXIOUS TO ESTABLISH THEIR RIGHTS IN A NEW NATION
WHICH AT THAT TIME HAD UNCERTAIN FRONTIERS AND FEW RULES.
LOUIS RIEL HAS BECOME A SYMBOL NOT ONLY TO THE MÉTIS PEOPLE,
BUT TO MANY OTHER CANADIANS AS WELL WHO VIEW WITH RESPECT AND
SYMPATHY HIS EFFORTS TO PROMOTE EQUALITY.

FROM THE SAFETY AND CIVILITY OF OUR MODERN NATION STATE, CANADIANS LOOK BACK WITH A CERTAIN DEGREE OF AWE AT THE STRUGGLES WHICH TOOK PLACE IN A DEVELOPING FRONTIER SOCIETY BESET BY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INEQUITIES. TODAY, THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS PROVIDES PROTECTION HOPE FOR MINORITIES - BE THEY LINGUISTIC, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS OR RACIAL. IN ADDITION TO THE CHARTER, WE CAN LOOK AT THE EXISTING MÉTIS LEADERSHIP AND THE ROLE WHICH THEY ARE PLAYING THROUGHOUT CANADA TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF MÉTIS INTERESTS.

THE MÉTIS OF TODAY ARE A BRIDGE BETWEEN TWO CULTURES. YOUR INDIAN HERITAGE GIVES YOU A STRONG SENSITIVITY TO THE UNIQUE PLACE WHICH NATIVE PEOPLE HAVE IN CANADIAN SOCIETY AND THE NEED TO PROTECT A LIFESTYLE WHICH IS A PRODUCT OF COUNTLESS AGES. YOUR FRENCH OR ENGLISH HERITAGE LINKS YOU TO THE EARLIEST EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, AND TO THE SPIRIT OF THE GREAT EXPLORERS WHO BEGAN THE MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY. IN THEIR ROLE AS SETTLERS AND FARMERS, THE MÉTIS POPULATION CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE EARLY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF MANITOBA. AS A SEPARATE PEOPLE, YOU AS MÉTIS HAVE ADDED NEW ELEMENTS TO YOUR CULTURAL MAKE-UP, IN EFFECT DEFINING A CULTURAL IDENTITY PARTICULAR TO YOUR COMMUNITY.

IF WE LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THIS PROVINCE, IT IS CLEAR THAT LOUIS RIEL AND THE MÉTIS PEOPLE IN GENERAL, CONTRIBUTED IN A MAJOR WAY TO MANITOBA'S DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING ITS ENTRY INTO CONFEDERATION. AS A QUÉBECER, I WANT TO EMPHASIZE TO YOU THAT QUÉBECERS, FOR VERY OBVIOUS HISTORICAL REASONS, FEEL A STRONG LINK WITH MÉTIS CANADIANS AND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CANADIAN FEDERATION.

THE MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION, ALONG WITH THE OTHER WESTERN MÉTIS ASSOCIATIONS WHICH MAKE UP THE MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL, HAS PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN ANALYSING ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO MÉTIS PEOPLE.

MÉTIS SELF-GOVERNMENT, THE CONCERNS OF ABORIGINAL WOMEN, THE FUTURE OF MÉTIS PEOPLE WITHIN CANADA - ALL THESE ISSUES HAVE ABSORBED YOUR ATTENTION. I AM PLEASED THAT MY DEPARTMENT HAS SUPPORTED AND CONTINUES TO SUPPORT THE MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION AND THE MÉTIS NATIONAL COUNCIL WITH SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD CORE OPERATIONS AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW.

THIS GOVERNMENT TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ASSISTING NATIVE PEOPLES, INCLUDING THE MÉTIS, TO RESOLVE THE MANY SENSITIVE ISSUES WHICH HAVE UP TO NOW DEFIED RESOLUTION.

YOUR DESIRE TO INFORM THE CANADIAN PUBLIC AT LARGE OF YOUR CONCERNS THROUGH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, RESEARCH REPORTS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS CLEARLY SHOWS YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE FOR NATIVE PEOPLES. I COMMEND YOU FOR THE WORK WHICH YOU HAVE DONE UP TO NOW, AND I CONGRATULATE YOU ON MAINTAINING THE SENSE OF PRIDE AND DEDICATION WHICH HAVE PROVIDED THE STIMULUS FOR YOUR MANY INITIATIVES.

TODAY, WE MARK THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HANGING OF LOUIS RIEL. IT IS A DAY FOR SADNESS, FOR REVERENCE, FOR REMEMBRANCE. ABOVE ALL, IT IS A DAY FOR ALL CANADIANS TO THINK ABOUT THE TUMULTUOUS EARLY DAYS IN OUR COUNTRY'S GROWTH, AND HOW THE EPIC STRUGGLES WHICH MARKED THOSE TIMES, OFTEN SO WRENCHING AND SO TRAGIC, SERVED TO RAISE THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF LATER GENERATIONS TO ISSUES OF EQUALITY AND JUSTICE, PAVING THE WAY FOR A MORE EGALITARIAN SOCIETY.

THANK YOU.



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NOTES FOR A STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE WALTER F. MCLEAN,
SECRETARY OF STATE OF CANADA,
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS OF DISABLED PERSONS
ON THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE
TO THE
ROYAL COMMISSION REPORT ON EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT

OTTAWA, CANADA

MARCH 8, 1985

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Good Afternoon.

Today's announcement will have a major impact on many Canadians. In my role as Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, I am especially pleased that the government has taken such an important step towards employment equity for women.

The federal government has committed itself to taking an integrated, comprehensive approach towards the achievement of full equality for women. The adoption of the employment equity principle represents a bold first step in this strategy.

Women's full participation in the labor force is essential to ensure Canada's future growth. The current under-utilization of working women and their qualifications is a waste of human resources that Canada can no longer afford. It also results in conditions that women cannot afford.

The statistics speak for themselves. In 1984, women earned only 64 cents for every dollar earned by men. Women's employment options are so narrow that fully three-quarters of employed women work in only five of the 22 major occupational groups. Most of these jobs are not only low paying, but also dead end, offering limited scope for advancement. In addition, many of these jobs are threatened by structural changes due to micro-electronics, automation and other technological developments. Further, many women who cannot find full-time jobs are forced to accept part-time work. In fact, in 1984, women accounted for 71 per cent of all part-time workers. This type of employment provides fewer job benefits, less security and fewer promotional opportunities than full-time work. Historically, women's unemployment rate has always been higher than that of men.

The adoption of employment equity by the federal government is designed to meet the needs of both women and the economy. In implementing this principle, the government is leading the assault on the under-training, under-employment, under-payment and outright exclusion of women from many occupations in the labor market.

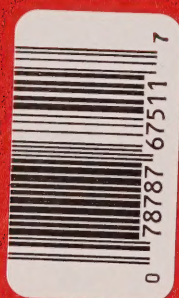
Employment equity brings together measures related to equal opportunity, affirmative action and equal pay for work of equal value. It also includes supportive measures in the areas of child care and training. The last two areas have been identified as being particularly significant to the full participation of women in the labor force. Indeed, at the First Ministers' Conference in Regina, the premiers committed themselves to improving access to training and to child care in order to help women achieve economic equality. Some of the premiers at the Regina meeting have stated that they, too, are developing specific policy measures to implement employment equity.

The measures we are adopting today are designed to lead to significant improvements in the economic condition of women. But they will do more than that. A successful economic recovery requires the full use of the skills and resources of the entire community. The federal response to Judge Abella's report is a necessary first step in the process toward economic equity and economic recovery. In fact, the principles of employment equity go to the very heart of a rejuvenated Canadian economy. In our commitment to employment equity, our aim is to tackle the systemic problems facing women in employment, to help debunk outdated myths about working women, to alert employers to the cost incurred by overlooking equally qualified women and finally, to ensure that employers recognize the benefits to be gained by training, hiring and promoting women on the same basis as men.

I believe that, on this International Women's Day, we have truly taken a step forward in achieving full equality for women in the work place.

In recognition of this important day, my remarks have focussed on action being taken with regard to employment equity for women. I want to stress, however, that I am equally pleased that the federal response has addressed the difficulties encountered by other groups which are served by the programs of my department. I speak now of Native Canadians, disabled persons, and visible minorities who face many of the same impediments to equal opportunity encountered by women. I can assure you that I will be closely monitoring the implementation of the measures outlined today and by all means at my disposal, actively encouraging employers to cooperate with us in this vitally important process.

This is my commitment as Secretary of State of Canada.



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